

A Karamanlidika Inscription from Mount Athos (1818)*

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Recent years have seen an increase in scholarly interest in the karamanli Christians, that sizeable population of Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians, who were mainly concentrated in Asia Minor, but pockets of whom were to be found in the Crimea-Azov region and in Turkey in Europe.¹ In the absence of extensive written records for the history of these populations, inscriptions in *karamanlidika* (Turkish *karamanlîca*), or Turkish written with Greek characters, constitute an important source of historical data; places of origin and places to which they migrated in search of a livelihood; the names in common use among them; the occupations they followed; their membership of guilds; the state of literacy prevailing in the communities in which they lived; some indication of the relative prosperity of the community or the individual; indications as to their life span

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1. See, for instance, S. Salaville and E. Dalleggio, *Karamanlidika, Bibliographie analytique d'ouvrages en langue turque imprimés en caractères grecs*, I (1584–1850) (Athens, 1958); II (1851–1865) (Athens, 1966); J. Eckmann, *Die karamanische Literatur*, in J. Deny, et al., ed., *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, II (Wiesbaden, 1964), pp. 819–35; F. Halkin, 'Acolouthies gréco-turques à l'usage des Grecs turcophones d'Asie Mineure', *Mémorial Louis Petit (Archives de l'Orient Chrétien, I)* (Bucharest, 1948), pp. 194–202; R. Clogg, 'The Publication and Distribution of Karamanli Texts by the British and Foreign Bible Society before 1850', pts. i and ii, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XIX (1968), 57–81, 171–98. Valuable information on the origins of the *karamanlides* is contained in S. Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles, 1971).

and, in some cases, the cause of death. Clearly, too, the study of inscriptions in *karamanlidika* has much the same value for the linguist interested in the historical development of the Turkish dialects, as has the study of printed books and documents written in *karamanlidika*.

A fairly extensive corpus of inscriptions in *karamanlidika* has been published, notably by I. H. Kalfoglu, *Ζινδζιδερέ καργεσινδὲ πουλουαν Ἰωάννης Πρόδρομος Μοναστήρη γιαχὸδ Μονὴ Φλαβιανῶν*,² G. Lampakis, *Οἱ ἐπὶ ἀστέρες τῆς Ἀποκαλύψεως ἦτοι ἱστορία, ἐρείπια, μνημεῖα καὶ νῦν κατάστασις τῶν ἐπὶ ἐκκλησιῶν τῆς Ἀσίας, Ἐφέσου, Σμύρνης, Περγάμου, Θυατείρων, Σάρδεων, Φιλαδελφείας καὶ Λαοδικείας, παρ' ἧ Κολόσσαι καὶ Ἱεράπολις*,³ and E. Rossi, *Tre iscrizioni turche in caratteri greci di Burdur in Anatolia*.⁴

As might be expected most of these inscriptions are to be found in Asia Minor, although the largest group of inscriptions still extant is to be found in the courtyard of the monastery of the *Zoodokhos Pigi* at Balıklı, outside the Silivri Kapı in the land walls of Istanbul. One of the very few *karamanlidika* inscriptions

2. (Der Saadet (Istanbul), 1898), (*Zincidere kariyesinde bulunan Ioannis Prodromos Manastiri yahut Moni Flavianon*), pp. 437ff.

3. (Athens, 1909), pp. 397ff.

4. *Accademia nazionale dei Lincei. Rendiconti della Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, series VIII (1953), 69–75. Cf. F. V. J. Arundell, *Discoveries in Asia Minor, including a Description of the Ruins of Several Ancient Cities, and especially Antioch of Pisidia* (London, 1834), I, p. 350. See also V. Kandis, *Ἡ Προῦσα, ἦτοι ἀρχαιολογική, ἱστορική, γεωγραφική καὶ ἐκκλησιαστική περιγραφή αὐτῆς* (Athens, 1883), p. 144; I. Ioannidis, *Καισάρεια μητροπολιτλερὶ βὲ μααλουμάτη μουτενεββιά (Kayseri Mitropolitleri ve malûmatî mütenevvî'a)* (Der Saadet (Istanbul, 1896), p. 114; A. M. Levidis, *Αὶ ἐν μονολίθοις μοναὶ τῆς Καππαδοκίας καὶ Λυκαονίας* (Constantinople, 1899), pp. 74–5; F. Sarre, *Reise in Kleinasien* (Berlin, 1896), p. 151; B. Pace, 'Ricerche archeologiche nella regione di Conia, Adalia, e Scalanova (1914 e 1919)', *Annuario della . . . Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente*, VI–VII (1923–4), 427–8; G. de Jerphanion, *Mélanges d'archéologie anatolienne; monuments préhelléniques, gréco-romains, byzantins et musulmans de Pont, de Cappadoce et de Galatie* (Beirut, 1928), I/II, p. 292; V. Ph. Adamantiadis, 'Ἡ Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἐπαρχία Προῦσης, Μικρασιατικὰ Χρονικά, VIII (1959), 106–7; E. Vei-Khatzidaki, *Χριστιανικὲς ἐπιγραφὰς Μικρᾶς Ἀσίας καὶ Πόντου στὸ Μουσεῖο Μπενάκη, Μικρασιατικὰ Χρονικά, VIII (1959), 60–73; S. Eyice, 'Konya ile Sille arasında Ak Manastır, Manâkıb Al-Ârifin'deki Deyr-i Eflatun', *Şarkiyat Mecmuası*, VI (1965), 158–9. A tombstone with an inscription in Turkish written with Armenian characters from Bursa has been published by A. R. Yalgın in 'Bursa müzesinde enteresan bir mezar taşı', *Türk Folklor araştırmaları*, I (1950), 92–3.*

to be found in Turkey in Europe is that carved on a fountain outside the monastery of *Aghia Lavra* on Mount Athos. This inscription has been published by G. Millet, J. Pargoire, and L. Petit in their *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de l'Athos*⁵ but as their reading of the inscription is inaccurate in a number of respects it is republished here.

Front: *ΝΗΓΤΕΛΙ . ΧΑΤΖΙ . ΓΙΟΥΒΑΝ*
 TAMATI . ΧΑΤΖΙΓΕΩΡΓΙ . ΟΡΤ
 ΑΓΙ ΠΟΡΛΟΥ . ΠΕΤΡΟ . 1818
 ΗΝΖΕΣΟΥΛΟΥ . ΣΑΜΑΤΙΑΤΑ
 ΤΑΣΤΖΙ . ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΣ

Reverse: *ΝΗΓΤΕΛΙ . ΚΕΒΕΝΤΖΙΟΓΛΟΥ*
 ΧΑΤΖΙ ΛΑΖΑΡΙ . ΚΑΡΤΑΣΙ . ΧΑΤΙ
 ΠΕΤΡΟ . ΕΤΟΣ . 1818

Niğdeli Hacı Yuvan
Damad-īHacıYorgi. Ort-
ağī Borlu Petro. 1818
İncesulu Samatya'da
Taşçı Dimitri

Niğdeli Kefencioğlu
Hacı Lazar. Kardaşı Hacı
Petro. Etos 1818.

Haji Ioannis of Niğde⁶
His son-in-law Haji Georgios
His partner Petros of Bor. 1818
Dimitrios from İncesu, stonemason in Samatya.

Haji Lazaros Kefencioğlu⁷ of Niğde
His brother Haji Petros. Year 1818.

5. *Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome*, XCI (Paris, 1904), pp. 141–2, inscription no. 428.

6. Niğde, Bor, and İncesu are all in the region of Kayseri, where there was a heavy concentration of karamanli Christians.

7. Literally, 'son of the shroud maker'.

Millet, Pargoire, and Petit's reading of *αγιμορλου* in line three makes no sense, and the reading *ΑΓΙ ΠΟΡΛΟΥ* should be adopted, as is clear from the inscription itself. Millet, Pargoire, and Petit do not translate the inscription but their interpretation of it is clearly questionable in a number of respects. *ΤΑΣΤΖΙ* is clearly not a Turkicized form of *Ἀθανάσιος* but is the Turkish word *taşçı* (stonemason). It is quite possible that the fountain, which is fairly elaborate, together with its inscription, was carved by Dimitri, the stonemason from İncesu, near Kayseri. Millet, Pargoire, and Petit also seem to believe that *ΣΑΜΑΤΙΑΤΑ* is a Turkicized form of the Greek surname *Σταματιάτης*. *ΣΑΜΑΤΙΑΤΑ* is, of course, a transliteration into Greek characters of the Turkish *Samatya'da* (*Ψαμάθειον*) (in Samatya) where the stonemason Dimitri plied his trade. The Samatya-Narlı Kapı-Yedikule quarters of Istanbul contained a large concentration of karamanli Christians throughout the period of the *Tourkokratia*,⁸ Millet, Pargoire, and Petit appear to interpret *TAMATI* as a Turkicized form of *Σταμάτιος* although I prefer *damad-ī* (son-in-law). The fountain was presumably built as a result of a benefaction by the individuals mentioned following a pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain. The monument is of interest in that it confirms our knowledge that the karamanli Christians, despite their frequent ignorance of Greek, often made pilgrimages to such traditional Orthodox holy places as Mount Athos, Jerusalem, and the monastery of Kykkos in Cyprus.⁹

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8. See, e.g., A. M. Schneider, 'Yedikule und Umgebung', *Oriens*, V (1952), 207–8.

9. Numerous guides to the main centres of Orthodox pilgrimage were published in *karamanlidika*, see, e.g., Salaville and Dalleggio, op. cit., I, and R. Clogg, 'Notes on some Karamanli books printed before 1850 now in British libraries, with particular reference to the Bible translations of the British and Foreign Bible Society', *Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά*, XIII (1967), 545. There is an exceptionally fine copy of the *Ἀζήμ Πατήσοῦχ Μοναστήρ Κύκκονουν . . .* (*Azim Padişah Manastır Kykkonun . . .*) (Venice, 1816) in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. This was given to the British archaeologist D. G. Hogarth in July 1888 by the *igoumenos* of the Kykko monastery who informed him that 'the monastery used to distribute copies to pilgrims of distinction'.